

What is Claimed Is:

1. A circuit breaker comprising:
a case;
separable contacts;
an operating mechanism for opening and closing said separable contacts, said operating mechanism including an open position, a snap closed position, a closed position, an operating handle for moving said operating mechanism between the open and closed positions, a movable contact arm carrying one of said separable contacts, a link having a first end pivotally mounted with respect to said case, a second end and a projection, and a linkage having a first end and a second end, the first end of said linkage being pivotally mounted to the second end of said link, the second end of said linkage being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm; and

a flexible cantilever lever fixed within said case, engaging the projection of said link and holding said link in the open position of said operating mechanism, said flexible cantilever lever flexing and releasing the projection of said link and releasing said link as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the open position to the snap closed position.

2. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a pivot and at least one extension spring for moving said operating mechanism to close said separable contacts; wherein said case has an opening; and wherein said operating handle includes a first portion extending through the opening of said case and a second portion within said case, said at least one extension spring extending between said second portion and said pivot.

3. The circuit breaker of Claim 2 wherein said link is a third link; wherein said linkage includes a first link and a second link, said first link having a first end and a second end, said first link being pivotally mounted to said pivot at the first end of said first link, said second link having a first end and a second end, said second link being pivotally mounted to the second end of said first link at the first end of said second link and being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm at the second end of said second link.

4. The circuit breaker of Claim 2 wherein said separable contacts include a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm.

5. The circuit breaker of Claim 4 wherein said flexible cantilever lever delays motion of said link and said linkage, with said at least one extension spring being extended as said operating handle moves from the open position to the snap closed position of said operating mechanism, in order to load said linkage until said flexible cantilever lever flexes and releases the projection of said link, with said load being released as a snap close action, in order that said at least one extension spring drives said linkage and drives said movable contact arm carrying said movable contact toward said fixed contact.

6. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said flexible cantilever lever has an inverted T-shape, with a base portion fixed to said case and a cantilever portion extending within said case.

7. The circuit breaker of Claim 6 wherein said cantilever portion has a first side and a second side, with said first side engaging the projection of said link and holding said link in the open position of said operating mechanism.

8. The circuit breaker of Claim 7 wherein as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the closed position toward the open position, the second side of said cantilever portion engages the projection of said link (286).

9. The circuit breaker of Claim 8 wherein as said operating handle moves further from the closed position toward the open position, the cantilever portion flexes and releases the projection of said link (286).

10. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein the first end of said link is pivotally mounted to said case at a pivot; and wherein said operating handle is independently pivotally mounted to said case at said pivot.

11. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said circuit breaker is a telecommunication circuit breaker.

12. A circuit breaker comprising:
a case;
separable contacts;

an operating mechanism for opening and closing said separable contacts, said operating mechanism including an open position, a closed position, an operating handle for moving said operating mechanism between the open and closed positions, a movable contact arm carrying one of said separable contacts, a link having a first end pivotally mounted with respect to said case, a second end and a projection, and a linkage having a first end and a second end, the first end of said linkage being pivotally mounted to the second end of said link, the second end of said linkage being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm; and

a flexible cantilever lever fixed within said case, engaging the projection of said link and holding said link in the open position of said operating mechanism, said flexible cantilever lever flexing and releasing the projection of said link as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the open position toward the closed position.

13. The circuit breaker of Claim 12 wherein said flexible cantilever lever has an inverted T-shape, with a base portion fixed to said case and a cantilever portion extending within said case.

14. The circuit breaker of Claim 13 wherein said cantilever portion has a first side and a second side, with said first side engaging the projection of said link and holding said link in the open position of said operating mechanism.

15. The circuit breaker of Claim 14 wherein as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the closed position toward the open position, the second side of said cantilever portion engages the projection of said link (286).

16. A circuit breaker comprising:

a case;

separable contacts;

an operating mechanism for opening and closing said separable contacts, said operating mechanism including an open position, a snap closed position, a closed position, an operating handle for moving said operating mechanism between the open and closed positions, a movable contact arm carrying one of said separable contacts, and a linkage between said operating handle and said movable contact arm; and

a flexible cantilever lever fixed within said case, engaging the projection of said linkage and holding said operating mechanism in the open position, said flexible cantilever lever flexing and releasing said projection as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the open position to the snap closed position.

17. The circuit breaker of Claim 16 wherein said flexible cantilever lever has an inverted T-shape, with a base portion fixed to said case and a cantilever portion extending within said case.

18. The circuit breaker of Claim 16 wherein said linkage includes a first link having a first end and a second end, a lock, a second link having a first end and a second end, and a third link having a first end, a second end and said projection, the first end of said third link being pivotally mounted to said case, the second end of said third link being pivotally mounted to the first end of said first link, the second end of said first link being pivotally mounted to the first end of said second link, said lock maintaining said first and second links in an unbroken state, the second end of said second link being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm; and wherein said operating handle includes at least one arm within said case and at least one spring extending between said at least one arm and the second end of said third link.

19. The circuit breaker of Claim 18 wherein said cantilever portion has a first side and a second side, with said first side engaging the projection of said third link and holding said third link in the open position of said operating mechanism.

20. The circuit breaker of Claim 19 wherein as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the closed position toward the open position, the second side of said cantilever portion engages the projection of said third link.